

## THE EIGHTH ANNUAL CONNECTIONS FOR LIFE CONFERENCE

By Karen Zarsadias-Ige, Public Information Officer



On Wednesday, April 2, 2014, the eighth annual *Connections for Life through Employment and Education* conference took place at the California Endowment in downtown Los Angeles. Hosted by the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH), this year's conference was attended by both Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Mark Ridley-Thomas (Second District) and Michael D. Antonovich (Fifth District). Each of the Supervisors welcomed the participants and provided opening remarks.



"Every life we save, it's a life that can be a productive one," Supervisor Antonovich said to the audience. He was followed by Supervisor Ridley-Thomas who got everyone ready for the day. "It's not about stigma, it's all about dignity all day long. We're talking about going forward," he enthusiastically stated. "Today is about hope, wellness and recovery."



“This is my favorite event of the year because I meet people who are in recovery with jobs and opportunities in education,” said LACDMH Director Marvin Southard, D.S.W. Funded by the voter-approved Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), the conference is designed to provide inspiration and hope to LACDMH consumers interested in pursuing employment, education or volunteer goals. There were workshops on topics related to employment and education as well as resources available about services and programs in the community. Consumers also shared their success stories with peers.

